

NATIONAL EDUCATION (IRELAND).

(MARLBOROUGH STREET TRAINING COLLEGE, DUBLIN).

RETURN to an Order of the Honourable The House of Commons,
dated 12th May, 1914:—for,

A RETURN showing:—

- (1) The Report of the Medical Adviser of the Marlborough Street Training College (Dublin) *re* the sanitary condition of Talbot House, and of the other houses where lady candidates in training are lodged;
- (2) The Report of Sir Charles Cameron on the same;
- (3) The facts relative to the original grant of Mrs. Drummond to build Talbot House.

(*Mr. Barrie*).

Ordered, by THE HOUSE OF COMMONS, to be Printed,
31st August, 1914.

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COPY OF REPORT OF DR. PRATT, MEDICAL OFFICER OF THE
MARLBOROUGH STREET TRAINING COLLEGE.

19 FITZWILLIAM SQUARE,

DUBLIN, 7th August, 1911.

SIRS,

In answer to your letter of the 31st July, I have to say that I consider the Sanitary and Hygienic condition of the residential portion of the Women's Branch of the Marlborough Street Training College (Talbot House and the Building in the centre of the grounds known as the Branch) is extremely unsatisfactory. In the first place these buildings are situated only a few feet above the level of the river, and not more than 300 yards from its bank. I feel certain that a large amount of the sickness in the College is due to this.

When there is a high tide, and the foul water of the river rises above the level of the "House Drains," the sewer gas imprisoned between the mouth of the House Drains and the Traps in the establishments is forced back into the grounds of the latter, and I believe into the houses also.

I have seen, more than once, sewerage in the basement of the Branch.

It is also a fact that whenever there is a high tide it is always followed by a number of cases of Septic diseases, Tonsillitis, Relaxed Throat, Whitlow, &c. The fact that there were several cases of Diphtheria last session in itself indicates a very grave state of affairs, as this disease is hardly ever present except when sanitary and hygienic conditions are very bad. Considering the low level and proximity to the river the "Ground Air" must be very bad and very injurious to the students' health.

As far as the internal arrangements go, I think baths, closets, sinks, pipes, &c., are good; they have been tested several times. I do not see how any structural alterations in the buildings can alter the very serious state of affairs at present existing.

If any further proof of the bad state of health of the Female Students is required, it is only necessary to examine the entries in the Medical Book from November 3rd, 1910, to July 7th, 1911, which shows that I was obliged to make 55 visits and interviews with, and prescriptions for 275 students.

I have frequently called attention to the wretched condition of these buildings. I think it is deplorable that so many strong and healthy young Irish women should be housed in premises where their health is undermined.

Many of them leave the college having lost their vital energy and suffering from shattered nerves.

I earnestly desire that these premises may be abandoned and that new premises may be erected on the fine site already acquired at Glasnevin.

Your obedient servant,

(Signed) J. DALLAS PRATT, M.D., F.R.C.S.

The Secretaries,
Board of National Education.

COPY OF REPORT OF SIR CHARLES CAMERON.

From Sir Charles A. Cameron, C.B., M.D.,
F.R.C.P., F.R.C.S., F.L.C.
Medical and Executive Officer of Health.

PUBLIC HEALTH DEPARTMENT OF THE
CORPORATION OF DUBLIN,
CORK HILL,
DUBLIN, 29th September, 1911.

Having been requested to express an opinion as to the suitability of Talbot House for the purpose for which it is now occupied, I have no hesitation in stating that it is not suitable and for the following reasons:—

(1) The site of Talbot House is low-lying, the floor of the basement story being below the level of the river Liffey, when there is a high tide.

(2) The district in which the house is situated is one of the most densely populated in the city. It includes many purbeas.

(3) From a study of the incidence of Typhoid fever in Dublin, I found that cases of this disease were 50 per cent. more numerous, per 1,000 persons living on the gravelly soils than on the boulder clay, these being the chief soils on which Dublin is built. Talbot House is on the gravelly soil.

(4) The Death-rate in Dublin and other Irish towns is much higher than the rate in rural districts. For this reason and a similar one applied to towns other than Irish, the removals of Orphanages, Schools, Asylums, &c., from towns to the open country are very frequent.

(5) I assume that the great majority of the students in Talbot House have been born and reared in the country. It is well established that country girls who enter service or become shop assistants do not, on the whole, get as good health in town as they did in the country.

In conclusion I am of opinion that Talbot House is not suitable as a training college for girls.

CHARLES A. CAMERON,
*Ex-President and Professor of Hygiene,
Royal College of Surgeons.*

STATEMENT OF THE FACTS RELATIVE TO THE ORIGINAL GRANT OF
MRS. DRUMMOND TOWARDS THE MARLBOROUGH STREET
TRAINING COLLEGE.

In the year 1840, Mrs. Drummond, widow of a former Under Secretary for Ireland, contributed a sum of £1,000 towards providing a training establishment for female teachers, and the Commissioners of National Education provided another £1,000, with the sanction of the Lord Lieutenant. The establishment for females was accordingly opened in 1842, on the grounds of Tyrone House, but with its entrance from Talbot Street.

P. E. LEMASS, }
W. J. DILWORTH, } *Secretaries.*

OFFICE OF NATIONAL EDUCATION,
13th August, 1914.